

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1198

INFO CINCUSNAVEUR

COMFAIRMED

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7360

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, IT

SUBJECT: LA MADDALENA

1. IN MAY 20 DISCUSSION WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE FORLANI, AMBASSADOR PROBED FURTHER INTO OBSTACLES GOI PERCEIVES TO ACCEPTING BIA AMENDMENT FOR SUPPORT ACTIVITIES AT LA MADDALENA.

2. FORLANI ADMITTED THAT IT WAS ABSURD THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ITALY SHOULD BE HOSTAGE TO LOCAL POLITICAL ISSUES. HE HOPED THAT THE MAYOR OF LA MADDALENA COULD BE PREVAILED UPON BY HIS FOLLOW SARDINIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO STOP HIS OBSTRUCTIONIST TACTICS. BUT THE LARGER AND MORE DIFFICULT PROBLEM WAS THAT CREATED BY THE ENVIRONMENTALISTS.

3. MAGISTRATE GIANFRANCO AMENDOLA, WHO HAS TAKEN THE LEAD IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RADIOACTIVE POLLUTION, IS (ACCORDING TO FORLANI) TRYING TO BUILD A POLITICAL CAREER ON THE ISSUES OF THE ENVIRONMENT. HE HAS ONLY RECENTLY WRITTEN A LETTER TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ASKING FOR A MEETING ON THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF SARDINIA (READ LA LADDALENA) FOR MAY 22. FORLANI OBSERVED THAT THE TIMING IS OBVIOUSLY DEvised TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE PRE-ELECTORAL PERIOD. AMEN-
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DOLA'S PURPOSE, HE UNDERSTANDS, IS TO ATTACK THE USN PRESENCE

AT LA MADDALENA AND THROUGH IT THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY. UNDER COVER OF A TECHNICAL GATHERING, AMENDOLA WOULD RAISE THE ISSUE OF THE BASIS UNDER WHICH THE USN PRESENCE AT LA MADDALENA WAS CONCEDED AND WHETHER OR NOT IT HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT. IF THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT HAD NOT GIVEN ITS APPROVAL, AMENDOLA WOULD, FOLLOWING THE JAPANESE MODEL, DEMAND SUSPENSION OF USN ACTIVITIES UNTIL THE PRESENCE OF THOSE ACTIVITIES RECEIVED LEGISLATIVE CONSENT. FORLANI ASSERTED NO CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WOULD ATTEND ANY MAY MEETING. HOWEVER, A SIMILAR MEETING WAS PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER AT WHICH INTER ALIA THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, CAMEN (THE MILITARY NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY), AND CNEN (THE CIVILIAN NUCLEAR AGENCY) WOULD BE REPRESENTED. GIVEN THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RADIOACTIVE POLLUTION ISSUE (AN ISSUE HE RECOGNIZED HAS NO BASIS IN FACT) HE BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF LA MADDALENA UNTIL AFTER THE SEPTEMBER MEETING.

4. COMMENT: THE GOI'S DIFFIDENCE IN DEALING WITH THE ESSENTIALLY SIMPLE PROBLEM OF A BIA AMENDMENT FOR LA MADDALENA IS BECOMING A SOURCE OF CONTINUED IRRITATION. WE CAN HARDLY ACCEPT FORLANI'S WILLINGNESS TO PERMIT A DELAY BEYOND SEPTEMBER. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WE REITERATE OUR RECOMMENDATION (REFTEL) THAT THE SECRETARY RAISE THE PROBLEM WITH MINISTER RUMOR (EMBTel 6543) DURING HIS VISIT TO ROME ON JUNE 3. IN THE MEANWHILE THE EMBASSY WILL BE MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF FORLANI'S STAFF IN THE CONTINUED EFFORT TO ELIMINATE SOME OF THE WORKING LEVEL'S OVERSENSITIVITY TO THE PROBLEM. VOLPE

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